



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

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House Bill 6390
An Act Concerning Military Leave for State Employees

Testimony of Commissioner Melody A. Currey

Veterans' Affairs Committee
February 17, 2015

As the agency responsible for administering the State Personnel Act, the Department of Administrative Services offers the following comments regarding **House Bill 6390, "An Act Concerning Military Leave for State Employees."** House Bill 6390 proposes to "amend state statutes to provide state employees who are members of the armed forces of the state, or any reserve component thereof, with three weeks of paid military leave for field training and up to fourteen days of paid military leave for weekend drills."

Under §5-248(c) of the Connecticut General Statutes provides:

Any full-time permanent employee in the state service who is a member of the armed forces of the state or of any reserve component of the armed forces of the United States and is required to undergo field training therein shall, for the period not exceeding three calendar weeks of such field training, be entitled to a leave of absence with pay in addition to his annual vacation. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent any such employee from attending ordered annual field training while on regularly scheduled vacation if he so desires.

In addition, §27-33 of the Connecticut General Statutes states:

The armed forces of the state may assemble for drill, escort duty or any special service as ordered by the Governor and shall participate in encampments, maneuvers or other exercises, including outdoor target practice, as may be required by the laws and regulations of the United States relating to the National Guard or naval militia or as may be ordered by the Governor. Each officer and employee of the state who is a member of the armed forces of the state or of any reserve component of the armed forces of the United States shall be entitled to absent himself from his duties or service while engaged in the performance of regularly ordered military or naval duty. No such officer or employee shall be subjected by any person, directly or indirectly, by reason of such absence, to any loss or reduction of vacation or holiday privileges or be prejudiced by reason of

such absence with reference to promotion or continuance in office or employment or to reappointment to office or to reemployment. While engaged in the performance of regularly ordered military or naval service, each officer or employee who is a bona fide member of the National Guard, naval militia, reserve corps or organized militia shall receive his salary or compensation as such officer or employee, provided the period of absence in any calendar year shall not exceed thirty days.

It should be noted, however, that certain collective bargaining agreements provide for different military leave benefits for their members.

It is unclear at this time whether the intent of House Bill 6390 is to change the population of state employees who are eligible to receive paid leave under § 5-248(c) or §27-33 or if it is intended to alter collectively bargained for benefits. It is also unclear whether the proposal regarding 14 days of paid leave for weekend drills applies only to employees who are required to miss scheduled work in order to attend the drills.

DAS would appreciate the opportunity to work with the Committee to better understand the goals this bill is intended to achieve.

We thank the Committee for permitting DAS to comment on this bill.